

Benghazi, it was begging and pleading by the people in Libya to have more help and everything was denied. It was to the point that the person in charge of security felt like the Taliban were all inside the building in Washington. Lieutenant Colonel Wood said:

We were the last flag flying. It was a matter of time.

On August 16, before the September 11 attack, there was a cable from Ambassador Chris Stevens saying: We cannot defend this compound against a coordinated terrorist attack.

Those are the facts. This is what Susan Rice told the world:

Well, first of all, we had a substantial security presence with our personnel . . . with our personnel and the consulate in Benghazi.

I have a simple question. Who told her that, who briefed her about security in Benghazi, because the person who told her that needs to be fired because they are completely incompetent or they lied to her.

If she made this up, she needs to resign because nothing could have been further from the truth. If she just made this up to make the administration look good in light of all of the other evidence about security, then she is not an honest person when it comes to conveying national security incidents.

So, please, after all of these investigations, after all of these hearings, can somebody tell me from where Susan Rice got this information? How could she conclude, based on what we know now, that we had a substantial security presence with our personnel in the consulate in Benghazi. She went on to say: "Well, we obviously did have a strong security presence."

She said this on ABC and this on Fox. If you listened to her on September 16, you would believe we were well prepared for this attack and we had secured the consulate in a reasonable fashion.

If anybody had looked at the actual record—the information available to our own government in our own files—you could not have said that honestly. I am sure this was a good thing to say 6 weeks before an election. The problem is it is not remotely connected to the truth.

To this day, nobody can answer my question. Where did she receive information about the security level in Benghazi? She has never been interviewed by anybody 20 months later.

Why was she chosen? If John Bolton had taken Condoleezza Rice's place to talk about a consulate—not under his control but under her control—people would want to know where the Secretary of State was. Ambassador Rice was the U.N. Ambassador—U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations. She had no responsibility for consulate security.

The person responsible for consulate security and our footprint in Libya was Secretary Clinton. I have always wondered why they chose her. To this day, no one has answered that, but Susan Rice said on 12/13/2012:

Secretary Clinton had originally been asked by most of the networks to go on. . . . She had had an incredibly grueling week dealing with the protests around the Middle East and North Africa. I was asked. I was willing to do so. It wasn't what I had planned for that weekend originally, but I don't regret doing that.

And she further said she had no regrets about what she told the American people.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Fifteen minutes have expired.

Mr. GRAHAM. I ask for 5 minutes more if I could.

Mr. SANDERS. Reserving the right to object, how much longer—

Mr. GRAHAM. Am I into the Senator's time? If the Senator is next, may I have 1 minute?

To be continued—I can't do this justice in 15 minutes, but this is what I am suggesting. If it is true that the Secretary of State could not go on television and talk about the consulate under her control and tell us about how four Americans died at that consulate—the first ambassador in 33 years—because she had a grueling week—if that is true—and I don't believe it is, but if it is—then we need to know because that will matter to the country as we go forth. If it is not true, why would Susan Rice say it?

To be continued—there is so much about this incident called "Benghazi" that we don't know and that makes no sense to me that I am not going to give up until I can tell the families what I believe to be the truth. And what I have been told is nowhere near the truth.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

NET NEUTRALITY

Mr. SANDERS. I apologize to my friend from South Carolina.

Mr. President, I want to talk about an issue that millions and millions of people all over this country are increasingly concerned about; that is, last week the FCC, the Federal Communications Commission, released a proposal in response to a recent Federal court decision that struck down the Commission's 2010 Open Internet Order. The proposal would, for the very first time, allow Internet service providers to be able to pay for priority treatment.

What this means, in point of fact, is the end of net neutrality and the end of the Internet as we know it. What net neutrality means is that everyone in our country—and, in fact, the world—has the same access to the same information. Whether you are a mom-and-pop store in Hardwick, VT, or whether you are Walmart, the largest private corporation in America, you should have the same access to your customers.

Net neutrality also means that a blogger, somebody who just blogs out his or her point of view, in a small

town in America should have the same access to his or her readers as the New York Times or the Washington Post.

If the FCC allows huge corporations to negotiate "fast-lane deals," then the Internet will eventually be sold to the highest bidder. Companies with the money will have the access and small businesses will be treated as second- or third-class citizens. This is grotesquely unfair and this will be a disaster for our economy and for small businesses all across our country.

I want to take this opportunity to thank Commissioners Clyburn and Rosenworcel for their strong support of net neutrality. They are doing exactly what the American people want from the Commission. During last week's hearing Commissioner Rosenworcel stated:

We cannot have a two-tiered Internet, with fast lanes that speed the traffic of the privileged and leave the rest of us lagging behind.

Commissioner Clyburn noted:

[The] free and open exchange of ideas is critical to a democratic society.

And she is, of course, absolutely right.

I have to say—and I don't mean to be particularly partisan on this issue, but the facts are the facts—that in contrast, the Republican Commissioners, Ajit Pai and Michael O'Reilly, would like to completely deregulate the Internet. Commissioner O'Reilly said, in response to the proposal:

As I've said before, the premise for imposing net neutrality rules is fundamentally flawed and rests on a faulty foundation of make-believe statutory authority. I have serious concerns that this ill-advised item will create damaging uncertainty and head the Commission down a slippery slope of regulation.

That is Republican Commissioner O'Reilly.

What does all of this mean in English? What it means is that when we talk about deregulating the Internet, we are talking about allowing money—big money—to talk, and allowing the big-money interests to once again get their way in Washington. That is very wrong. We cannot allow our democracy to once again be sold to the highest bidder.

I think all of us agree the Internet has been an enormous success in fostering innovation and enabling free and open speech across the country and throughout the world. We kind of take it for granted. But when the Presiding Officer and I were growing up, there was no Internet, and I think we can all acknowledge now what a huge advance it has been for business and for general communication. Unfortunately, these Republican Commissioners on the FCC want to fix a problem that does not exist. What they want is to change the fundamental architecture of the Internet to remove the neutrality that has been in place for decades—since the inception of the Internet—and to allow big corporations to control content online.

Let me say the American people—people in Vermont and across this

country—care very deeply about this issue. A little while ago, in advance of the FCC's vote, on the Internet I asked people in Vermont and throughout the country to share their views with me, to write to me and tell me what they thought about the attempt to do away with net neutrality, and I was blown away by the response we received. More than 19,000 people have submitted comments to my office so far, and what they are saying in statement after statement after statement is that the FCC has to defend net neutrality.

I think these 19,000 people represent the vast majority of the people in this country who understand how important net neutrality is, and I want to take this opportunity and a very few moments to share some of the comments I received through my Web site.

Anthony Drake of Moreno Valley, CA, said:

Net neutrality is vital for a free and open internet, and the economic advantages that it has brought our nation and the world. Please work to reclassify ISPs as common carriers under Title II of the Communications Act.

Stamford, VT, resident Roy Gibson concurred, telling the FCC that Internet providers "should be treated like utilities." I agree with Roy Gibson.

Reg Jones of Bennington, VT, said President Obama must uphold his campaign promise to enforce net neutrality. He further said:

Net neutrality should be mandated as President Obama promised. Any attempt to allow differential speeds and access to the Internet should be squashed and those who propose it should be replaced by people who represent all of the citizens of this country. Internet access should be for the good of all, not for the select few who already have too much power and more money than they need.

William LaFrana of Versailles, KY, said:

Everyone should have equal access to the Internet. The Internet was developed with taxpayer funding, and should not be held hostage to corporate piracy.

Patricia Moriarty from Harwich Point, MA, wrote:

The Internet is the only place where we truly have freedom of speech and the ability to freely exchange new ideas around the world. Leave the Internet OPEN.

President Obama himself has long been on record supporting net neutrality. In 2007, then-Presidential candidate Obama said:

What you've been seeing is some lobbying that says that the servers and the various portals through which you're getting information over the Internet should be able to be gatekeepers and to charge differential rates to different Web sites . . . so you can get much better quality from the Fox News site and you'd be getting rotten service from the mom and pop sites. . . . And that I think destroys one of the best things about the Internet—which is that there is this incredible equality there.

That is what Barack Obama said when he was campaigning for the Presidency. Barack Obama was right when he said that, and I would very strongly urge the President to stand for what he

said when he was campaigning for President and defend net neutrality.

I understand the FCC is an independent body, but the American people have spoken with a clear and unified voice that they want to maintain net neutrality. What is so frustrating for the American people is to elect a candidate—in this case President Obama—who campaigned on an issue and now see many of the FCC members he appointed moving in a different direction. It is simply not enough for the President to sit on the sidelines on this issue. We need him to speak out for net neutrality, as he did when he campaigned for President.

Let me conclude by simply saying the Commission will soon consider whether to reclassify the Internet as a so-called common carrier. Under this distinction, the Internet would be treated like other utilities. Being classified as a common carrier will mean Internet service providers must provide the same service to everyone, without discrimination. This is the only path forward to maintain an open forum, free of discrimination.

Over the next few months the public will have an opportunity to weigh in on this proposal by the FCC. Each of us—and I hope every Member of Congress—should be concerned about this issue. I encourage you to be vocal. If people want to write to my office—sanders.senate.gov—we already have 19,000 people commenting and we welcome even more. I hope the American people rally around this issue of net neutrality and that we defeat any proposal to do away with that.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Florida is recognized.

Mr. NELSON. I thank the Chair.

(The remarks of Mr. NELSON and Ms. COLLINS pertaining to the introduction of (S. 2361) are located in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Michigan is recognized.

Mr. LEVIN. I thank the Presiding Officer.

(The remarks of Mr. LEVIN pertaining to the introduction of S. 2360 are printed in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

Mr. LEVIN. I yield the floor and note the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. DONNELLY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

HONORING OUR ARMED FORCES

STAFF SERGEANT JESSE WILLIAMS

Mr. DONNELLY. In recognition of Memorial Day, I would like to take a moment today to honor three Hoosier

servicemembers we lost in the last year.

We remember Army SSG Jesse Williams of Elkhart, who was killed in action after his Black Hawk helicopter crashed in Zabul Province, Afghanistan, on December 17, 2013.

Staff Sergeant Williams attended Elkhart Central High School and completed basic training in 2006. He was deployed three times—once to Iraq in 2007 and twice to Afghanistan in 2010 and 2013. Staff Sergeant Williams is survived by his daughter, parents, grandparents, and siblings. His family accepted the Purple Heart on his behalf last month.

TECHNICAL SERGEANT DALE MATHEWS

We remember Air Force TSgt Dale Mathews from Rolling Prairie, IN, who died in a plane crash during a training exercise in England on January 7 of this year.

Technical Sergeant Mathews graduated from New Prairie High School in 1994. He served tours of duty in both Iraq and Afghanistan. His service in the Air Force centered on flying rescue missions and taking care of others. After serving almost 20 years, he was involved in the rescue of nearly 300 people.

Technical Sergeant Mathews is survived by his wife, his son, daughter, stepson, stepdaughter, and his parents and grandparents.

STAFF SERGEANT RANDALL LANE

We remember Army SSG Randall Lane of Indianapolis.

Staff Sergeant Lane passed away from a noncombat-related illness in Afghanistan on September 13, 2013. Staff Sergeant Lane served his country proudly in the Marines and in the Indiana Army National Guard for over 20 years. He is survived by his wife, three daughters, stepson, parents, brothers and sister, and his grandmother.

These men are all true heroes. They served their country with distinction. They made their family, friends, and all the people of Indiana and America proud. I send my continued thoughts and prayers to their families.

Like these three men, the United States has a long history of selfless warriors—men and women choosing to serve not because of the glory it brings to them but because of the freedom and safety it brings to others. When one of them makes the ultimate sacrifice by giving their life for ours, it is important that we pause and remember the true price of freedom.

I was proud to see my fellow Hoosiers come together in reflection and remembrance when we lost these three American sons, and I ask that we do the same this Memorial Day.

May God bless the United States of America.

I thank the Presiding Officer and yield the floor.

HEALTH CARE

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, this week President Obama told a group of campaign donors that people who still